

# URGENT ACTION

## HARASSED FOR SPEAKING OUT AGAINST THE ARMY

**Dafne Alejandra de la Cruz is at risk of reprisals from soldiers in Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas State, in relation to a complaint she filed against the Army for the death of her husband. There are fears for her safety and concerns that authorities need to do more to provide effective protection.**

On 23 February, a group of soldiers arrived at the house of **Dafne Alejandra de la Cruz** (21) in Nuevo Laredo near the US-Mexico-border. The soldiers intimidated members of her family by shouting and showing their weapons, including her children and her mother, and aggressively questioned Dafne in regards to a complaint she had filed days earlier before the National Human Rights Commission alleging that soldiers had shot her husband, Gustavo Ortega Pérez, on 15 February while he was driving his van. The soldiers insisted on questioning Dafne Alejandra de la Cruz about this complaint. In addition, they threatened to sexually abuse one of Dafne Alejandra de la Cruz's friends who was present by throwing her against the wall and insulting her. They later absconded with cash that Dafne Alejandra de la Cruz had left in her vehicle.

Subsequently, on 6 March, four military vehicles arrived at the house of Dafne Alejandra de la Cruz's mother-in-law, where Dafne Alejandra de la Cruz was staying temporarily. Representatives in plain clothes from the military prosecutor's office asked to speak with her in relation to the complaint regarding her husband. They questioned her and insisted on taking her testimony in the case of her husband. When she declined to speak to them, the military officials returned for two subsequent days on various occasions, including during the middle of the night. They insisted on interviewing Dafne Alejandra de la Cruz and her sister-in-law.

According to information received, military vehicles have continued to station themselves close to Dafne Alejandra de la Cruz's residence.

**Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:**

- Calling on the authorities to guarantee the safety of Dafne Alejandra de la Cruz and her family, including the cessation of intimidations against her and the provision of effective security and protection to them, in accordance with their wishes;
- Calling for a full, prompt impartial investigation into the incidents on 15 February involving members of the Mexican army that may have caused the death of Gustavo Ortega Pérez. Ensure this investigation is carried out by civilian authorities, without interference of military prosecutors, and bring those responsible to justice.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 28 APRIL 2015 TO:**

Minister of Interior

Miguel Ángel Osorio Chong  
 Secretario de Gobernación  
 Bucarelli 99, col. Juárez, CP 6600,  
 México, D.F., México  
 Fax : +52 55 5093 3414  
 Email: secretario@segob.gob.mx  
**Salutation: Dear Minister/Señor  
 Ministro**

Federal Attorney General

Arely Gómez González  
 Procuraduría General de la República  
 Paseo de la Reforma, 211-213  
 Col. Cuauhtémoc, México, C.P. 06500  
 México, D.F., México  
 Fax: +52 55 5346 0908  
 Email: ofproc@pgr.gob.mx  
**Salutation: Dear Attorney General /  
 Estimada Señora Procuradora**

**And copies to:**

Comité de Derechos Humanos de Nuevo  
 Laredo  
 Email: dhlaredo@gmail.com

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:**

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Several regions of Mexico, including Tamaulipas State, have suffered extremely high levels of criminal violence as the government has deployed military forces to combat criminal gangs and drug cartels fighting to control different regions. In this context there has been a steep rise in allegations of grave human rights violations committed by military and police, including extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, torture and arbitrary detention, but virtually no one has been held accountable for these abuses. Abductions and killings are routinely attributed to criminal gangs and not fully investigated to establish the circumstances of the crimes or whether police and security forces are implicated in abuses, such as excessive use of force or summary executions. CNDH conducts independent enquiries when relatives or victims file complaints or present evidence of federal police and security forces involvement, but many relatives are too afraid to file complaints and CNDH enquiries rarely result in justice for perpetrators of human rights violations. The government of President Enrique Peña Nieto has made commitments to end human rights violations, including torture, but has yet to demonstrate that such abuses will not be tolerated. In the case of abuses committed by the army, in June 2014 the Code of Military Justice was reformed to exclude from military jurisdiction cases of human rights violations committed by soldiers against civilians. Nevertheless, military prosecutors continue to interfere in such cases.

Name: Dafne Alejandra de la Cruz

Gender m/f: f

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